In the Drawings:

Please amend the Drawings as show by the corrections in red ink on the attached "Replacement Sheet."

REMARKS

Claims 11 and 13-23 are currently pending. Claims 12 and 13 have been cancelled. Claims 14-19, 21 and 23 have been amended to correct improper claim references. Claim 11 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of now cancelled Claims 12 and 13. Further, Claim 15 has been amended to provide greater clarity, and Claim 17 has been amended to remove a redundancy. No new matter has been introduced by any amendment to the claims.

A "Replacement Sheet" correcting the errors noted by the Examiner in Figure 1 is herein submitted.

The Abstract has now been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

The Specification has now been amended at Paragraph [007] in order to correct a grammatical error.

On the merits, the Examiner has rejected Claims 11-17, and 19-23 (and apparently Claims 20 and 22) under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,037,087 (Foulds). The arguments advanced in support of this rejection are set forth in item No. 8 on pages 4-10 of the Official Action, and not herein repeated.

Claim 10 has also been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the Foulds reference, the arguments for which are discussed at item No. 10 on pages 10 and 11 of the Official Action, and not herein repeated.

All ground for rejection, not otherwise rendered moot by this amendment are respectfully traversed.

Foulds discloses a control system for a rolling mill having a plurality of roll stands. Each stand comprises a drive (drive motor 16) and a speed control 17 and roll gap control 25. The controls 17 and 25 are regulated by a computer 19. The computer 19 is supplied by way of the operator's desk 20 with target data for the regulators 17 and 25. The control computer transmits the targets by way of a bus system to the regulators 17 and 25. Figure 1 and the related passages in Foulds discussed in the Office Action have been considered by the Applicants.

The Examiner argues that the control computer is an automation device in the sense that the operator's desk 20 in Claim 1 is commissioning computer, with the target values and the update program (see col. 3, lines 37-40 in Foulds) as operating parameter and program code.

As amended, Claim 11 now recites the additional features that the system additionally comprises an operating computer to monitor and/or influence the rolling mill; that the commissioning computer is configured to commission the operating computer as well; and that the transmission of operating parameters and/or program code takes place by way of the bus system.

To the extent that the Examiner argues arguing that the displays 42 and 43, on the one hand, and the operator panel 68, on the other hand, are operating computers as recited in amended Claim 11, Applicants disagree. Displays 42 and 43, as shown in Foulds' Figure 1 are components of the operator's desk 20. But since the Examiner has characterized the operator's desk 20 as a commissioning computer, the displays 42 and 43, which after all are therefore components of the commissioning computer, cannot be, at the same, the operating computer.

The Examiner further argues that the operator's desk 20 is also a commissioning computer with respect to the operating computer. This is incorrect. As shown in Foulds' figures, there is an arrow from the operator panel 68 to the control computer 19. Foulds does not disclose any other data paths from operator panel 68. This applies likewise to Foulds Figure 1 and to the related Foulds disclosure. Thus, the situation would seem to be that data are transmitted only from operator panel 68 to control computer 19. Apparently no data are transmitted to operator panel 68.

Even if (alternatively or in addition to the operator panel 68), the displays 42 and 43 were to be understood as operating computers, Foulds does not disclose the additionally claimed features discussed hereinabove. While there is a reference in Foulds to transmitting an update program to the control computer 19, there is no reference -- whatsoever -- to transmitting any data from the operator's desk 20 to the displays 42 and 43. Even if the displays 42 and 43 should be regarded as operating computers in the sense of Claims 12 and 13 -- which is not justified by the Foulds disclosure -- Foulds still does not disclose the additionally recited features in amended Claim 11.

While Claim 17 is indirectly dependent on Claim 11, via Claim 15, it recites additional features which render it patentable. Note that the guide system comprises a first and a second bus system. The first bus system serves to transmit operating parameters and/or program code from commissioning computer to automation device, so that the commissioning computer and the automation device are connected to each other by way of a data connection. The second bus system serves to transmit operating parameters and/or program code from automation device to drive system, so that the commissioning computer and the drive system are connected to each other by way of a

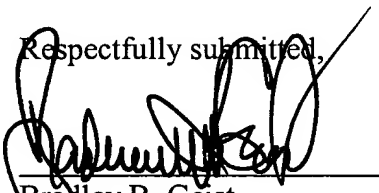
data connection. The operating computer is joined to the first bus system by way of a data connection. The first bus system also serves to transmit information between the operating computer and the automation device, the information transmitted being required for operation of the rolling mill.

Foulds appears to disclose to a second bus system and the third of the above five features. While the word "bus" implies an open structure to which several components may be connected; however, the word "bus" does not imply a direct connection of two components with each other. But just such a direct connection of two components is involved in the claimed connection between operator's desk 20 and control computer 19.

Even if this last mentioned connection is regarded as a first bus system, Foulds would then only disclose features 1, 2 and 3; but not the operator panel 68, nor that the displays 42 and 43 which are connected to the first bus system. Hence, information required for operation of the rolling mill cannot be transmitted between the operating computer and the automation device by way of the first bus system.

For all of the reasons advanced herein and in view of the amendments made herein, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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